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MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, DDI Executive Staff

SUBJECT : Comments on Security Classification Act  
of 1975

REFERENCE : Memorandum dated 21 May 1975 from C/DDI/ES,  
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of 1975

1. The procedures outlined in subsection (c) (4) seem similar to those we now follow in response to E.O. 11652. The switchover should give little pain if we get sufficient notice. One of the requirements--providing the actual name of a classifier on the cover or the front sheet of a document--would cause problems since we print large numbers of covers in advance and the individual classifier is subject, of course, to the normal vicissitudes of bureaucratic life. A similar proposal was advanced in an early draft of 11652, but a numerical designator was deemed OK in the final version.

2. I would think that the classification criteria (subsection d) would be sufficient if more specificity concerning the product of an intelligence operation, as against the methods used in gathering the product, was included, especially under Secret and Confidential. The criteria should be a little bit more general and deal with intelligence information as well as intelligence methods.

3. There seems to be sufficient protection, subject to the conditions in the preceeding paragraph, in the general downgrading and declassification section (e) (8) and (e) (9), as long as these sections are interpreted in the way 11652 is interpreted: that is, that periodic publications, which draw a wide variety of highly sensitive sources, should be exempt from automatic declassification. A publication like the National Intelligence Daily includes sensitive intelligence information, on Soviet defense developments, for example;

a fact that argues against arbitrary declassification after one, two, or even ten years. I would also note that some members of the Classification Review Committee will be named by Congress.

4. I would like to make two other observations: one, the passage (page 6), "classification markings means the various levels of limitation placed on access, control, use, or dissemination of official information," seems to bring into question the use of that wide variety of dissemination controls used by the various intelligence-gathering organizations. Two, paragraph 8 (page 4) speaks of "full" Congressional access to classified information whenever such access is necessary to investigative or legislative pursuits.



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